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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

OPC 256

TRANSCRIPT OF PRESS AND RADIC NEWS BRIEFING, MONDAY,
November 16, 1962, 12:40 p.m.

MR. WHITE: Gentlemen, I would like to initially fill you in on a meeting held this morning between representatives of labor and representatives of the Government--

MR. BISHOP: Any AP present?

MR. WHITE: Any AP present? Not yet.

[Additional reporters came into the briefing room.]

MR. WHITE: As I said, I would like to fill you in on a meeting held this morning between representatives of the Government and representatives of labor, called for the specific purpose of discussing two things: One, concerning handling of cargoes of karakul from Afghanistan the other having to do with handling of cargoes by Turkish ships.

On the Government side the feeling is that the failure of the union to handle cargoes of karakul or cargoes from Turkish ships creates inequities beyond the original concept of the ILA embargo.

to tell

Now, I don't have/anyone in this room that Afghanistan is a landlocked country which has only three

access routes through which to go for its exports. The first of course is through Pakistan. That route is closed due to differences. The second is through Iran, which is long, difficult, and expensive. And the third is through the Soviet Union, and the Soviet Union has taken advantage of difficulties concerning the route through Pakistan and the distance and the expense of Iran to offer sort of bargain prices for the transport of the Afghanistan goods through the Soviet Union.

I don't need to tell anyone here, I should not think it necessary to tell anyone here that this government through its aid program has been attempting to assure that Afghanistan not be totally reliant on the Soviet Union.

But, to go back to their principal export, which is karakul: About 10 to 15 million dollars worth of karakul is shipped to the United States each year from Afghanistan. This represents one quarter of their total export earnings. The shipment of karakul to the rest of the free world represents one-half their total export earnings.

Now, recently the Queen Mary arrived in New York with bales of karakul aboard marked "Point of origin, Afghanistan, transshipped through the USSR. The ILA refused to handle this cargo. A Polish ship is arriving tomorrow, also bringing karakul. As I say, this is a

basic export of Afghanistan and a significant item in its over-all income.

Now, with respect to Turkey: In response to our informal approaches in mid-September, the Turkish Government responded to that by completely banning the use of Turkish ships in trade of any kind with Cuba. Prior, however, to the setting forth of this regulation, three Turkish ships were or had been loaded with materials from Soviet ports for Cuba. At the time these ships were loaded, the Turkish Government did not have the necessary authority which they later had. However, due to the fact that these three Turkish ships went to Cuba, my understanding is that the ILA imposed an across-the-board embargo on the handling of cargoes from Turkish ships. The cargoes of these three ships were of a classification not covered by our quarantine, in other words, did not contain military equipment.

Therefore the Government side, as I say, this morning put forward the proposition that this really caused great inequities particularly on the Turkish Government which had staunchly supported us in our informal request and also concerning the karakul.

The result of the meeting was that the unions gave us general assurances that they would cooperate. In other words, that they understood our position--

Q Did you say "union" or "unions"?

A Unions. They understood our position and would cooperate.

Now, those who participated this morning, on the Government side, [Under Secretary of Labor John F. Meany] Pat Moynihan, Special Assistant to the Secretary of Labor; Mr. Phillips Talbot, Assistant Secretary of State, and Mr. Bayless Manning. Mr. Manning is in Mr. Ball's office. I am not absolutely certain of the labor side, but my understanding was George Meany, President, AFL-CIO, Captain Bradley--I am sorry, I don't have his first name.

Q William.

A What is it?

Q I think it is William.

A Well, whoever knows. He is President of ILA; and Mr. Theodore Gleason of ILA. That is all I have on that subject, gentlemen.

Q That was here in Meany's office?

A Yes; the AFL-CIO.

Q Meany's?

A Yes.

Q Linc, what is the Department's reaction to this Cuban offer to permit on-site inspection if they could inspect the dismantling of these bases from which we send off all these alleged spies, saboteurs, and all the

rest of these evil people?

A The Cuban government's statement constitutes an attempt to avoid adequate international arrangements for inspection and verification--

Q International arrangements?

A Adequate international arrangements for inspection and verification that Cuba will not once again become a base for offensive weapons. If the Cuban government is sincerely anxious about its own security and is determined to live at peace with its neighbors, we can think of no better method of allaying its fears than the presence in Cuba of representatives of the United Nations.

Q Linc, is this a rejection, then, of the Castro proposal?

A Let me go background: The Castro proposals are pretty well hedged about. This is the answer to it. Now, you can determine for yourself what that means. *End Body and*

Q Linc, would we be willing to consider inspection in a different context of any American areas in return for adequate inspection and verification on the Cuban side?

A I would rather not speculate on that at this stage.

Q Linc, does the statement itself the last phrase, imply the continuing presence of UN representatives?

A That's difficult to answer. The whole purpose of such presence, of course, would be, as I have said, to assure that Cuba does not again become an offensive threat to this Hemisphere--base for such an offensive threat.

Q Linc, has this Cuban proposal been made known to the Department in any way except by publication in the Cuban broadcasts?

A No. All we know about it is what we get from the broadcast itself.

A But we anticipate that Mr. McCloy will discuss this whole problem with Mr. Mikoyan this afternoon, or whenever Mr. Mikoyan gets into New York?

A Well, I understand that Mr. Mikoyan will be a guest at a dinner given tonight by Acting Secretary General U Thant, at which dinner Ambassador Stevenson, Yes, and McCloy will be present. Now, whether they will get into this or not, I know not.

Q Linc, is Under Secretary Ball or someone else in Washington going up to see Mr. Mikoyan?

A No; I know of no one from Washington going up.

Q Well, are there any plans to invite Mr. Mikoyan to come down to Washington?

A No, sir.

Q Has he asked?

A Not to my knowledge, no.

Q If there were discussions of inspection arrangements, would they presumably be carried out in the negotiations between Mr. McCloy, Stevenson, and Kuznetsov?

A That is where they have been going on. Presumably they would continue in that channel.

Q Sir, do you have any comment, then, on Mr. Castro's argument that the OAS has no right to deal with Cuban affairs? [Laughter]

✓ A No one knows better than Mr. Castro ~~or~~ the ~~responsibilities~~ ~~Charter~~ of the OAS contained in its Charter

Q Does the Secretary plan a news conference this week?

A I can't answer that specifically. I don't know yet.

Q What is the State Department's reaction on reports that India has rejected the key provision of the Red Chinese ceasefire proposal?

A Well, this is a matter for the Indians to speak to, not for the United States to speak to.

Q Has Secretary Harriman pledged on behalf of the United States further aid to India?

A Well, the purpose of the mission, as the

President told you last Wednesday, is to make an assessment on the scene. Meanwhile, those previous urgent requests received from the Indian government are going forward. These are in types small arms, ammunition, things of that nature. But, as I say, the Harriman mission is making on-the-spot assessment of further needs.

Q Is he reporting back?

A He is.

Q Can you spell out a little further what the mission of the C-130's is?

A Nothing beyond what I have already given you, namely to fly men and equipment within India.

Q Is that combat zones or--

A No; I think, Spence, if you will read ^{your own tapes} ~~that~~, you will see that the announcement has been made in Delhi that they are not flying into combat areas.

Q Can you say anything about Harriman's mission to Pakistan?

A I have nothing on that.

Q He is going?

A I don't know.

Q Thank you, Linc.

A You are very welcome.

[Whereupon, at 12:55 p.m., the briefing was concluded.]